


WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

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Latino Urban Forum
This Los Angeles-based forum advocates for enhancing the quality of life in disadvantaged and underrepresented Latino communities. Chaired by the inspirational James Rojas, the LUF takes on many walkability and planning-related issues

Urban Advantage – Envisioning Smart Growth Images
A great collection of images that visually display the *what-if* scenarios of implementing smart growth concepts

American Public Transportation Association
APTA and its members and staff work to ensure that public transportation is available and accessible for all Americans in communities across the country

Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines
ADAAG establishes design requirements for the construction and alteration of facilities in the private and public sectors

The Ahwahnee Principles
The Ahwahnee Principles are an essential set of guidelines developed by some of the experts in the land-use and community development fields

Textpattern / Doteasy

WHAT IS A WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOOD?

A Walkable Neighborhood is... a place where people live within walking distance to most places they want to visit, whether it is school, work, a grocery store, a park, church, a bank, retail shops, a drug store, and so on.

A Walkable Neighborhood is... a place where walking, biking, or mass transit are the preferred means of transportation, and motorized vehicles are used on rare occasions.

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ARTICLES

BIKE TOUR PART OF LA'S SIXTH ANNUAL NACIMIENTO TOUR

Announcement from the [Latino Urban Forum](#):

The 6th Annual Nacimiento Tour
Sunday, January 8, 2006

The free tour will start at 12 noon and wind its way through homes and public displays of East Los Angeles' rich folk art of nativity scenes. The tour is either self-guided by car or you can join the bike tour. The 15-mile bike tour, which covers the communities of Highland Park, Lincoln Heights, and Boyle Heights, will begin and end at the pocket park on the corner of First Street and Chicago in Boyle Heights.

Helmets are required.

Tour: The homes will be available for viewing from 12 noon to 3 pm. The bike tour registration begins at 11:30 am. Ride starts at 12:00 pm. Take the self guided tour any time between noon and 3:00 p.m.

Place: Bike tour start and end location: pocket park at First Street and Chicago, Boyle Heights.

Trip: 15 mile bike ride, moderate to easy with rolling hills.

Self guided car tour – check out this year's map at www.theraretimes.com.

Bike RSVP: Email: [lmvela \(at\) earthlink.net](mailto:lmvela@earthlink.net) by January 7, 2005.
Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition 213-629-2142

Check/download the great flyer at www.labikecoalition.org

Sponsors include the [Latino Urban Forum](#), [The Rare Times](#), [Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition](#), and of course, the residents.

Rain or threat of Rain Cancels!!!!

Editor's Note: The [Latino Urban Forum](#) is an amazing organization based out of Los Angeles. The organization is chaired by a great guy as well, James Rojas, who I admit was an inspiration for me to create this site. I would strongly advise you to become a member of their forum, especially if you live in the Los Angeles area.

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[Transportation Management](#)

Plan, procure, execute and optimize your transportation network
www.manh.com

[Trip Planner](#)

ORBITZ: The Faster, Easier Way to Find Trip Deals! Just ORBITZ and Go
www.ORBITZ.com

[How Cities Work](#)

Why do some cities succeed? And why do some fail?
www.alexmarshall.org/

[People In Place](#)

Creative Cities, Creative Tourism Conference: 19-22 Feb 06, Melbourne
www.pip06.com

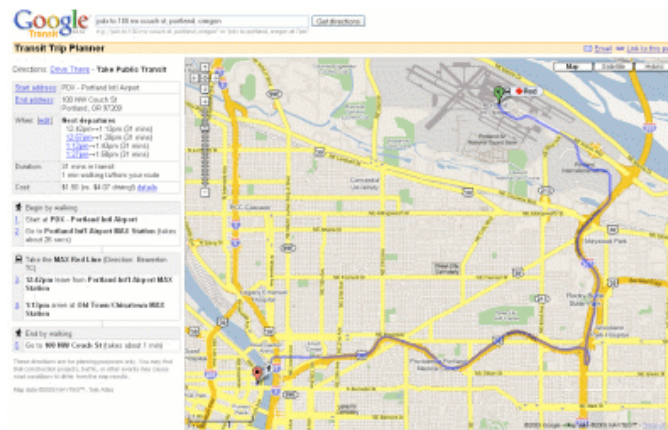
[Siemens AG](#)

Mass Transit: Innovative Products, Systems and Services
www.siemens.com/transportation/

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GOOGLE'S TRANSIT TRIP PLANNER



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Yes, Google has ventured into the world of public transit! They have launched yet another beta application, [the Transit Trip Planner](#). Here is how [they describe it](#):

Do you live in or near a city? Want to go someplace—to the airport, to dinner, to work every day—and not worry about the hassles and expense of driving and parking? Google Transit Trip Planner enables you to enter the specifics of your trip—where you're starting, where you're ending up, what time of day you'd like to leave and/or arrive—then uses all available public transportation schedules and information to plot out the most efficient possible step-by-step itinerary. You can even compare the cost of your trip with the cost of driving the same route!

At the moment we're only offering this service for the Portland, Oregon metro area, but we plan to expand to cities throughout the United States and around the world.

I hope they launch the service to other cities soon, it looks very cool. I also like the fact that they compare the public transit fares with the true costs of driving. Maybe this will start to get people thinking in other ways about transit and walking, since [Google](#) has a massive influence over our daily lives. Site notification courtesy of [Josh](#).

WILL 70 MILLION AMERICANS BE STRANDED IN 2030?

A survey released by the American Public Transportation System shows expected but still staggering statistics on the mobility for aging Americans. The survey states that 82 percent of Americans age 65 or older worry that they will be stranded and unable to get around when they can no longer drive. Maintaining independence was rated as “extremely important” for 98 percent of the survey’s respondents.

“These findings are dramatic proof that America’s older citizens believe staying mobile is essential and that ‘mobility security’ just like ‘financial security’ and ‘medical security’ needs to be planned for,” said William W. Millar, president of APTA.

More than 70 million people will be 65 years of age or older by 2030. This fact **was not lost** on the attendees of the **White House Conference on Aging** a few

weeks ago. The resolution to “Ensure that Older Americans Have Transportation Options to Retain Their Mobility and Independence” received the third most votes out of the 73 resolutions presented to the conference. This resolution will be one of the 50 that will be sent to Congress and President Bush with the intent of guiding the national aging policies over the course of the next 10 years.

Mobility for seniors is one of the topics that really gets me fired up. So often I feel that the needs of older Americans are just cast aside in this country, although this is hardly just an American issue. There are so many glaring issues to address on nearly every street – [crossing intervals](#) at intersections that are much too short for all persons to safely cross, lack of adequate [curb ramps](#), and dangerous [cross slopes](#).

All people that design or construct pedestrian facilities should try and navigate around in a wheelchair on the sidewalks and streets for several hours (at a minimum) to get a feel for what it is like to have a disability and have to get around. I guarantee that our facilities would be designed at least slightly better after that experience. Even in the most walkable places, navigation for seniors and people with disabilities is extremely difficult. Many walkable places are historic, older places that do not have modern facilities compliant with today's standards.

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ATTENTION SNOW-COVERED COMMUNITIES: SHOVEL YOUR SIDEWALKS

Right now I am in the completely snow-covered Midwest. In just about every community I have passed through on this trip I see a common pet-peeve of mine repeated over and over again – sidewalks covered with snow. In Northern Illinois where I have been traveling (visiting my hometown of [Sterling, Illinois](#)), it has not snowed for at least several days. The streets are perfectly clear. So why not the sidewalks? I understand there are budget issues and every other excuse under the book for not shoveling. But, if you want to be the walkable community that every community seemingly wants to be these days, then you have to do the little things first. Shovel the sidewalks! What do you think if New York City stopped shoveling the sidewalks, you think anyone would be upset? People still enjoy walking when the weather is cold or when there is snow on the ground. And when they do walk, the snow gets compacted and often turns very icy. How many people do you know in cold weather places has broken a bone falling on the ice? Probably several.

Today, I saw an even worse situation while visiting a family friend in a nursing home. A person was walking down the street heading home from the grocery store with a case of beer. There were no sidewalks, and the street shoulders were buried under snow, so he was walking in the middle of the road. Plus, this was in front of the nursing home on a fairly busy street. So senior citizens and persons with disabilities in this center are basically on an island – many are able to walk or roll but it is too unsafe. Despite the fact that the building is located just a few feet from a grocery store, a drug store, and a video store. Sidewalks are essential pieces to the health and vitality of a community. They allow all citizens to actively participate in life functions without having access, or necessarily wanting access, to a car.

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WALKABLE COMMUNITIES A TOP PRIORITY IN HOUSING BOOM

One of the major trends in the recent housing boom is that home buyers are now purchasing smaller, more urban homes to avoid long commutes, writes James R. Hagerly in a [Wall Street Journal article](#). James Z. Pugash, chief executive officer of a company which finances housing developments, Hearthstone Inc., predicts that American cities will become *European-like*, with more midrise developments, fewer square feet per person, and higher housing costs.

The article also cites a 2004 paper for the Brookings Institution by Virginia Tech professor Arthur C. Nelson that says there are at least tentative signs of a rising demand for more compact living environments combining offices, entertainment, and homes. Mr. Nelson cites as an example Arlington County, Virginia, near Washington, DC. He writes that in 1990, the conventional wisdom was that the county was completely "built out" and there was no space for more residents. However, the county is encouraging higher-density housing on former industrial sites and transit-oriented development (TOD). The county is still growing rapidly, yet the character of established neighborhoods is being preserved effectively.

Speculation is that the desire for urban living in walkable communities will continue to grow, and condominium construction is soaring. In the 12 months prior to September, sales of condos and cooperative housing rose to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 942,000 units, up 14 percent. In the same time frame, sales of single-family homes rose only 6.9 percent.

The [National Association of Realtors](#) (NAR) also recognizes that a top priority of homebuyers is to purchase a home in a walkable neighborhood. "Realtors don't just sell homes, we sell communities and neighborhoods," said NAR President Walt McDonald, broker-owner of Walt McDonald Real Estate in Riverside, California in a [press release for the 2004 American Community Survey](#).

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THE AHWAHNEE PRINCIPLES FOR RESOURCE-EFFICIENT COMMUNITIES

The [Ahwahnee Principles](#) are an essential set of guidelines for land-use and community development. Here are the Principles in their entirety courtesy of the [Local Government Commission](#):

Preamble:

Existing patterns of urban and suburban development seriously impair our quality of life. The symptoms are: more congestion and air pollution resulting from our increased dependence on automobiles, the loss of precious open space, the need for costly improvements to roads and public services, the inequitable distribution of economic resources, and the loss of a sense of community. By drawing upon the best from the past and the present, we can plan communities that will more successfully serve the needs of those who live and work within them. Such planning should adhere to certain fundamental principles.

Community Principles

1. All planning should be in the form of complete and integrated communities containing housing, shops, work places, schools, parks and civic facilities essential to the daily life of the residents.
2. Community size should be designed so that housing, jobs, daily needs and

other activities are within easy walking distance of each other.

3. As many activities as possible should be located within easy walking distance of transit stops.

4. A community should contain a diversity of housing types to enable citizens from a wide range of economic levels and age groups to live within its boundaries.

5. Businesses within the community should provide a range of job types for the community's residents.

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